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TAGS: PREL PHUM UN KWBG IS

SUBJECT: THE AMBASSADOR'S MEETING WITH DEPUTY FOREIGN
MINISTER AYALON

Classified By: Ambassador James B. Cunningham, Reason 1.4 (b) (d)

¶11. (C) Summary. The Ambassador called on Deputy Foreign Minister Danny Ayalon September 9 and raised the Goldstone report, the UNGA event marking the 60th anniversary of UNRWA, possible problems with the AHLC, the Wataniya project and the Lebanese border village of Ghajar. The Ambassador noted possible difficulties resulting from the Goldstone report and urged that Israel conduct credible investigations of its own, noting that this could help turn aside efforts to engage the ICC. The Ambassador updated Ayalon on the UNRWA steering group meeting in New York, and he confirmed that an Israeli speaking role is a dead issue, for which he blamed the Palestinians. The Ambassador suggested the Israelis discuss this directly with the Jordanians and Egyptians to make the point that the moderate Arabs should change their approach to Israel's role in international organizations. On AHLC, the Ambassador, without going into details, noted some problems with a ministerial on the UNGA margins. Ayalon complained about the Norwegian special envoy's meeting with Khalid Meshal as well as his reportedly trying to hide the meeting from the Israelis. On Ghajar, Ayalon said the MFA has proposed to the cabinet that Israel accept the UNIFIL proposal. We will follow up with MFA. End Summary.

Wataniya

¶12. (C) The Ambassador briefed Ayalon on the possible looming collapse of the Wataniya telecommunications project and the damage that would do to the West Bank economy and prospects for the Netanyahu government to encourage foreign investment in the West Bank. Ayalon took note but did not respond.

Goldstone Report and ICC

¶13. (C) The Ambassador warned of the difficulties the Goldstone report could pose, of the possible linkage between it and action in the ICC. The Ambassador noted that Goldstone is credible, has broadened his mandate to include possible Hamas and Palestinian violations, and he would be taken seriously by the international community. Israel is under attack from many quarters at the moment, including by NGO's. The Ambassador urged that Israel take this seriously, and that the best response to the various reports would be credible investigations by the GOI of charges against the

IDF. We could best assist Israel on that basis. Credible investigations would also help turn aside efforts to engage the ICC. Ayalon charged that Goldstone wants a seat on the ICC bench and is hoping to use his report to boost his chances. Israel is very concerned about the report, which they have not seen, and by the possibility of efforts to indict Israelis. Palestinian involvement in any such efforts will be taken very seriously and badly by the GOI, Ayalon said. He agreed about the importance of Israeli investigations. (Note: The Embassy is following up with the MFA and MOD to get an update on exactly what they have done, or will do in the future, to investigate standing and new allegations of abuses during Cast Lead.)

UNRWA 60th Anniversary Event

¶4. (C) The Ambassador updated Ayalon on the UNRWA 60th anniversary steering group meeting in New York. He was aware of the outcome, said the Palestinians had orchestrated things behind the scenes, and that the Israeli UN mission has reported that an Israeli speaking is a dead issue. He was grateful for US support. The Ambassador told Ayalon UNRWA had also clearly supported an Israeli role. The Ambassador also suggested that they speak directly to Cairo and Amman. Even if it is too late to affect the outcome, the Israelis should make the point that cooperation rather than conflict in the international organizations is an important part of normalization as well. Ayalon instructed his staff to send instructions to Israeli ambassadors in Cairo and Amman.

AHLC

¶5. (C) Without going into details, the Ambassador told Ayalon that a number of problems with an AHLC ministerial on the UNGA margins had developed and we were considering how to proceed. The Ambassador said he would get back to Ayalon after the U.S. had spoken more to the Norwegians. He said Israel has its own problems with Norway and was considering its own options. The Norwegian Special Envoy had met with Hamas leader Khalid Mashal and attempted to hide that from the Israelis, adding to the insult of Norway withdrawing pension fund investments from the Israeli high tech firm ELBIT.

Ghajar

¶6. (C) According to Ayalon, the MFA has decided to recommend to the cabinet acceptance of the UNIFIL proposal, in order to be in complete compliance with UNSCR 1701. The matter still requires a formal cabinet decision, but he expected the MFA view would be accepted. He asked for US advice about the timing of the cabinet decision, which he expected will be not be until mid-October, after the Jewish holidays. He asked specifically how the announcement could be timed to best help March 14 and the government formation process.

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